



INDIANA CAREER COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLAN DISCUSSION DRAFT

April 2014



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STRATEGIC PLAN (DISCUSSION DRAFT)

The State of Indiana faces a great challenge that it must act with urgency to address. Many experts forecast that by 2025, nearly 60 percent of all jobs in the State will require some form of post-secondary education, with the knowledge and skills that accompany that education level. Currently, 33 percent of Indiana's workforce have the equivalent of a two year post-secondary degree or more, and along current growth projections, this is projected to increase to 41 percent. In essence, these data show that unless urgent action is taken, there will be a gap of 19 percent, which equates to approximately 675,000 workers, between the education, skills and knowledge demanded by Indiana's economy and the talent supply in 2025. Further, research indicates that there are also gaps between the type of careers that are growing or are poised for growth and that provide high earnings potential and the education and training pathways that Indiana's students are selecting. In addition, numerous employers throughout the State consistently report difficulty in finding workers with the interpersonal, or soft skills needed to thrive in the ever-changing, competitive workplace.

The Indiana Career Council was formed to determine solutions to these challenges by bringing together agency executives and thought-leaders from the multiple partner agencies and organizations that comprise Indiana's education, job skills training, and career development systems. To guide its

work, the Career Council has developed a comprehensive vision:

COMPREHENSIVE VISION

The Career Council will act with urgency to direct coordinated efforts among the responsible state agencies and partners to improve the education and training of Indiana's current and emerging workforce in order to ensure that at least 60 percent of Indiana's workforce will have the post-secondary knowledge, skills, and credentials demanded within Indiana's economy by 2025.

The Council will make recommendations to the Executive and Legislative branches of Indiana's state government in order to ensure that Indiana's education, job skills training, and career development system is closely aligned with high-value and emerging sectors, supports the aspiration and opportunities of the state's current and emerging workforce, closes the skills and knowledge gap, and supports the growth of Indiana's economy.



The Council's vision reflects a number of key ideas and values that it believes will propel Indiana's education, job skills training, and career development system forward towards achieving its goals.

- First, all partners at all levels within the system must **think and act as a system**. Great work has been done, but much of the great work has been completed by individual agencies or organizations. For too long, siloes have existed among partners as they have addressed the challenges that are shared by all. In order to address the challenges that are shared by all partners within the system, and to fundamentally transform the ways in which workers and students engage with and are served by the system, greater focus must be given to a true *systems approach*. Within such an approach, agencies and organizations work together, integrating resources and services, sharing goals, strategies, and successes, and ensuring that students and workers are provided with opportunities to improve their education, knowledge, and skill levels.
- Second, the Council believes that investments and resources made available through public funding should be **closely aligned with the primary sectors in Indiana's economy** that provide the greatest number of career opportunities *and* that provide the opportunity for high earnings potential. Further, partners within Indiana's education, job skills training, and career development must

enhance their ability to engage meaningfully with employers within these sectors, and ensure that programming addresses the emerging and existing education, knowledge, and skill needs of these sectors. Concurrently, the State and its partners need to ensure that there are effective and meaningful forums for employers in these sectors to collaborate with each other and to work with the system's partners.

- Third, leadership at all levels within the State's education, job skills training, and career development system must ensure that the system's approach **focuses on the individual student or worker's aspirations and needs** and provides all students and workers with access to pathways for improving employment prospects. In many cases throughout the existing system, activities and services provided to students and workers are *program-*focused, with the specific program being placed at the center of the service delivery and greater focus being given to meeting program requirements and less focus towards truly serving the individual student or worker. This has left the workers or students navigating a complex web of program requirements, often having to visit multiple program locations, multiple times, and providing the same information at each stop in order to receive the services needed. This paradigm must shift dramatically towards ensuring that system partners and program requirements are aligned



with the worker or student at the center of service delivery. In this *client-centered* approach, system partners and programs coordinate in a way that each individual student or client has a pathway to improving his or her education, knowledge, and skills and entering into a fulfilling and rewarding career, with partner and program resources designed to complement the individual's pathway.

The Imperatives, Objectives, and Strategies found within this strategic plan reflect the vision and values of the members of the Indiana Career Council as shaped by formal and informal meetings with stakeholder groups across Indiana. They are meant to serve as thoughts and directions that the State must take in order to meet the comprehensive challenge of ensuring that 60 percent of Indiana's workforce hold the post-secondary credentials and knowledge needed by 2025. Many of the strategies identified within the document will begin immediately; some others are more longitudinal in nature. However, what is explicitly clear is that all agencies and organizations at all levels within Indiana's education, job skills training, and career development system must act urgently with an acute focus towards ensuring that the State of Indiana and all Hoosiers have a great future with abundant opportunities.



STRATEGIC IMPERATIVES

As a framework for the strategic planning process, the Indiana Career Council define five strategic imperatives. These imperatives were developed in alignment with the required contents of the strategic plan, as established within I.C. 22-4.5-9. They serve as pillars for the strategic plan and help to organize the objectives and strategies identified by the Career Council. The strategic imperatives include the following:

Strategic Imperative 1:

Ensure the State of Indiana maintains a cohesive, demand-driven education, job skills development, and career training system that focuses on developing and delivering client-centered career pathways.

Strategic Imperative 2:

Increase the skill and education levels of Indiana's workforce in order to meet the needs of the State's employer community

Strategic Imperative 3:

Increase the alignment between education and training provided through the use of public funds and high-paying occupations and careers that are projected for growth

Strategic Imperative 4:

Make Indiana a leader in employment opportunities related to the fields of science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM)

Strategic Imperative 5:

Address the shortage of employment opportunities for individuals with a bachelor's degree or greater educational attainment



OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

The Indiana Career Council established two working task forces – the Program Alignment and Talent Development Task Force and the Employment Growth Task Force – to develop objectives and strategies to be included in the strategic plan. The Program Alignment and Talent Development Task Force identified strategies for Strategic Imperatives 1, 2, and 3; the Employment Growth Task Force determined strategies for Strategic Imperatives 4 and 5.

Each of the task forces held a series of facilitated meetings to discuss each of the imperatives and brainstorm potential strategies. To inform these discussions, the following stakeholder input was gathered and served as a foundation for the conversations:

- **Regional input sessions** – the Program Alignment and Talent Development Task Force conducted three (3) regional input sessions to gather information and ideas from experts throughout the state who are overseeing and delivering career and talent development services. Participants included representatives from businesses, industry associations, Indiana’s Regional Works Councils, workforce investment board members and staff, postsecondary education partners, and K-12 education representatives.
- **Partner input survey** – The Employment Growth Task Force gathered information and ideas from partner organizations that work daily to support the state’s economic growth. Specifically, the Task Force sought input on how to create or affect the environment that will support the growth of STEM-related or high-tech sectors in Indiana. Information was collected from industry associations, regional economic development organizations, and colleges and universities.

In addition to stakeholder input, the task forces also looked to successful models currently working in Indiana as well as promising practices from other states.



Objective 1: Change the culture within Indiana to value education and learning at all levels

(Aligns with Strategic Imperatives 1 through 5)

Only a generation ago, Hoosiers were able to have successful, long-term careers having only their high school diploma or sometimes even less formal education. Large manufacturing facilities offered lower-skill, relatively steady jobs that provided comfortable wages and good benefits. But that is no longer the case. As manufacturing and agriculture have shifted to require more advanced and technical skills and as the state's economy has diversified, education beyond a high school diploma and ongoing skill development are now essential for career success. This calls for a shift in Hoosiers' cultural understanding of the importance of education and learning. Students, parents, adult workers, and leadership should know that in order to succeed in all sectors of the knowledge economy, postsecondary education will be required whether it is gained through a certificate or industry-recognized credential or through longer degree programs.

The Indiana Career Council recognizes that changing the culture within Indiana will not be easy. It will require dedication and consistent messaging as well as the acceptance that progress will be slow. The Council believes, however, that even small, incremental progress in increasing the value placed on education will have significant impacts on transforming the career opportunities available within in Indiana.

Strategy 1.1

Encourage leadership at the state and local levels to adopt and communicate long-term goals to improve education attainment levels among Hoosiers

- Seek endorsement from the Indiana General Assembly of the Career Council's goal ensuring that 60 percent of Indiana's workforce holds the post-secondary credentials and knowledge needed by 2025
- Develop crisp messages to state leaders and policy-makers to further the understanding of the need to improve educational attainment
- Support leaders in promoting the message to their peers, partners, staff, and those at the local level so that it trickles throughout the system to the front-line staff

Strategy 1.2

Develop an overarching, consistent state-wide campaign to communicate the importance of education and learning



- Target messages toward multiple audiences. Generally, audiences should include K-12 students, postsecondary students, parents, and the adult workforce. For each of these target audiences, utilize data to identify the specific populations most in need of education and skill development. This may include, but is not limited to:
 - Low-income families
 - African Americans
 - English as a Second Language (ESL) individuals
 - Certain geographic considerations (specific counties or regions, urban vs. rural)
- Develop data-informed, specific outreach strategies for each target audience. For example, utilize social media to reach younger audiences and ensure that materials are available in multiple languages.
- Engage university student marketing teams to develop ideas and consider using famous Hoosiers such as David Letterman, past Governors, Chief Justice John Roberts to communicate the message

Strategy 1.3

Engage community partners throughout Indiana in the efforts to promote the value of education and lifelong learning through a “bottom-up” approach

- Enable community partners from throughout Indiana to provide input in developing the key messages that will form the state-wide campaign (see above in Strategy 1.2)
- Provide tools and resources community partners can use in promoting the importance of education and learning. Make these tools available to faith-based organizations, school, sports teams, non-profit organizations, local elected officials, clubs, and others



Objective 2: Provide a seamless system of partners that provides client-centric and student-centric services

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 1)

Partners within the talent development system are working with limited resources as well as limited information about the services being provided by one another. Agencies have similar goals and complementary services, and yet programs currently operate in siloes. In task force meetings, partner agencies uncovered opportunities to coordinate services in a more systemic way; stakeholders at the local level also suggested in the regional input sessions that the system should align around solutions, rather than funding streams and programs. A more seamless system of partners will offer a system that provides services based on the client's or student's needs, leading toward better outcomes and more efficient use of resources.

Note: "Partners" include, at minimum, Department of Workforce Development, Family Social Services Administration (specifically TANF, SNAP, and VR), Ivy Tech Community College, Vincennes University, Commission for Higher Education (specifically 21st Century Scholars/Learn More), and Department of Education (for all students, and specifically Career and Technical Education), WorkOne offices/local workforce investment boards, and regional Works Councils.

Strategy 2.1

Increase connectivity and service integration among partner agencies within the talent development system

- Building from existing data sharing agreements, strategically share data among partner agencies to serve individuals through most appropriate services
 - Provide "opt out" provisions in partners' data collection methods to information sharing
 - Explore statutory and legal allowances for sharing information
 - Develop processes for sharing cross-matching data among partners
 - Engage the Indiana Network of Knowledge (INK) to align efforts
- Eliminate duplication of services and identify opportunities to leverage existing funds for the expansion of services. Develop guidance with the input of all system partners and include the following direction:
 - Develop an asset map and gap analysis relative to career and technical education, postsecondary education, and the workforce system which includes include programs, funding, and facilities/equipment in the asset map
 - Support asset mapping and gap analysis at the regional level



- Based on opportunities identified in the asset mapping process, fill gaps in service or programs by leveraging partner assets and establishing cost-sharing agreements between partners
- Cost savings that are identified should be diverted back into training and/or other career development services

Strategy 2.2

Ensure all partners in the State's education, job skills training, and career development system share a common mission of increasing the skill levels of all Hoosiers and providing pathways to self-sufficient careers

- Direct partners to report on high-level, common outcome performance metrics through a "system dashboard" to be reviewed regularly by the Career Council.
- Task the INK Governance Committee, under the guidance of the Career Council, with identifying common outcome performance metrics which will indicate *system* success. Performance metrics may include:
 - Percentage of individuals/students that complete education/training and receive credential (High School Diploma/Equivalent, high-value credential or post-secondary certificate, associate degree, bachelor degree)
 - Percentage of individuals/students that complete education "on time" (as defined by CHE)
 - Percentage of individuals/students that enter into employment and/or next level of education within six months
 - Percentage of individuals/students that enter into employment and/or next levels of education in a field related to their studies (does not include K-12 students)
 - Average annual earnings of individuals/students that enter into employment
- Utilize INK to measure *system* outcomes on both a short-term and longitudinal basis

Strategy 2.3

As a microcosm of the larger talent development system, increase the coordination within the WorkOne *system* to include postsecondary education partners, collaboration with secondary Career and Technical Education providers, social services agencies and workforce partners.

- Develop a certification process for the system of WorkOne Centers to encourage alignment of partner services and resources to collectively serve individuals and businesses
 - Convene a work group to develop the standards and process for *system* certification



- Develop certification standards for Job Seeker services, Youth services, Business services, and Center Management standards
 - Determine the process for certification including reviewers, review process, duration of the certification, and any tools needed for implementation
- Ensure standards reflect a client-centric model that places the individual or business at the center and efficiently leverages partners' resources/programs to provide solutions
- Encourage WorkOne Certification through positive rewards and/or incentives that may include access to additional funding, public recognition, etc.
- Encourage DWD to lead the development a state-wide virtual tool that offers career exploration resources, job search/matching, access to available training and education for individuals' or employers' training needs, and other talent development resources to increase the volume of individuals and businesses that are served by the talent development system
 - Position the virtual tool to complement in-person client services that are available from all partner agencies, ensuring that the tool does not take the place of in-person services
 - Determine the necessary functions for a virtual tool to make it a high-tech, high-touch platform including:
 - Student/Jobseeker services
 - Employer services
 - "Back-end" functions such as data collection (tracking outcomes, capturing employer needs, etc.), information sharing among partners, etc.
 - On-line coaches for intensive counseling similar to the WGU model (touch base weekly, connect client to deeper resources, etc.)
 - Determine how the platform should be integrated with or linked to existing systems from Career and Technical Education, postsecondary education, and the workforce system
 - Conduct an inventory and assessment of state or regional workforce tools in order to identify effective tools and practices.
 - Link to current efforts of the Indiana Chamber and its partners to align K-12, postsecondary and adult career awareness, exploration, preparation and data resources within the platform so information is easily accessible by students, parents, adults and communities
 - Include a client feedback tool



Objective 3: Ensure individuals possess the foundational skills and information necessary for career success

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 2)

All career pathways, regardless of the sector, must begin with a strong foundation of literacy and solid workplace skills. In regional input sessions, stakeholders identified basic skills and “soft skills” as the biggest workforce challenges they face. In order for Hoosiers to develop the knowledge and skills required for careers, they must first have basic literacy skills. Similarly, they need to develop the workplace skills that can be built upon for long-term career success.

Recognizing the difficulty in both changing individuals’ work attitudes and overcoming barriers to literacy, the Indiana Career Council understands improving literacy and workplace skills will require a comprehensive strategy that involves state, regional, and community partners. Insofar, the Council offers the following strategies to complement other efforts to improve basic skills in Indiana.

Strategy 3.1

Leverage the Hoosier Family of Readers initiative to increase literacy throughout Indiana

- Expand Hoosier Family of Readers throughout Indiana for all citizens
- At the state and community level, seek private support/resources to increase access to reading materials (e.g. consider asking the First Lady to engage)
- Encourage communities to become involved in increasing literacy levels outside of the classroom by expanding or developing a model similar to Learn More Indiana’s College Success Coalitions
- Support the state’s efforts for a “strong start” through early learning

Strategy 3.2

Improve the “soft skills”/ “work place skills” of Indiana’s workforce

- Support the State Workforce Innovation Council (SWIC) as it launches a statewide soft skills development program and/or certification
 - Evaluate the lessons learned from *Work Ethic Certification* pilot sites across the state
 - Working with partners such as Ivy Tech, Vincennes University, Adult Education Centers, Building and Construction Trades Training Centers, veterans service



organizations, human resources associations, employer groups, and others, adapt the *Work Ethic Certification* for use with adult job seekers

- Promote the certification to employers to ensure it has value within the labor market
- Explore the use of business and community members in delivering career readiness information
 - Explore how successful regional initiatives such as EcO15, Dream It Do It and Advancing Manufacturing can be modeled and/or scaled
 - Develop a mechanism to engage community-based partners in furthering soft skill development through their existing programming. Partners may include, but are not limited to: Jobs for America's Graduates (JAG), 21st Century Scholars, Junior Achievement, Boys and Girls Clubs, 4-H Clubs, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Future Farmers of America (FFA), Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)



Objective 4: Increase the persistence and completion of students in the State's two-year colleges

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 2)

Currently, Ivy Tech and Vincennes University provide instruction to over 180,000 students on an annual basis; however, the two year graduation rate among these institutions is only 4 percent and the three year graduation rate is only 12 percent. Additionally, associate degree graduates from Indiana's two-year colleges take over 4 years on average to complete their degree. While Indiana's two-year colleges continue to address the unique challenges of their student bodies and have increased the efficiency with which they operate, increasing the number of graduates in recent years, they are not yet producing the number of graduates needed to fulfill the educational and skills requirements for Indiana's projected employer demand.

Strategy 4.1

Accelerate the completion of students in Indiana's two year colleges

- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should bring the following practices to scale at all campuses throughout Indiana:
 - Accelerated degree programs, such as Ivy Tech's ASAP program
 - Co-requisite remediation courses in both Math and English and other alternative paths to remediation
 - Industry Partnership Work-School Models, such as Vincennes's Toyota University
 - Enhanced connections with secondary career and technical education programs, including dual credit opportunities and early college models
- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should implement the following practices at all campuses throughout Indiana:
 - Block scheduled course schedules for all associate degree programs
 - Focused strategies for working adults, such as implementing an ASAP-type program for non-traditional adult students
 - Alignment of required math courses/pathways with programs of study

Strategy 4.2

Ensure that Indiana's two year colleges provide meaningful informed choice and proactive advising to all of their students

- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should bring the following practices to scale at all campuses throughout Indiana:



- Guided pathways for all students, which provide students with a default, sequential course schedule that leads to on-time completion
 - “15 to Finish” campaigns which encourage students to enroll in a minimum of 15 credit hours a semester in order to remain on track to graduate on-time
- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should implement meta-majors programming at all campuses. This type of programming allows students to initially major in a broad category, such as STEM, Health Sciences, or Education rather than being categorized as “undecided” or “unclassified.”

Strategy 4.3

Ensure that the leadership and governance of Indiana’s two year colleges firmly commit to continuous improvement practices and measure the success of the institutions based upon meaningful outcomes

- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should regularly provide professional development for leadership, administration, faculty, and advising staff. Professional development should include focuses on innovative practices for increasing student attraction, persistence, completion, and workforce outcomes, and developing and enhancing techniques for making proactive changes
- Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana and Vincennes University should include labor market outcomes as a key indicator of success in educating their students in all programs on all campuses



Objective 5: Increase students' awareness of career opportunities within Indiana

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 2)

The first step in order for students' to make informed career planning decisions is to equip them with knowledge and information about of the vast array of career opportunities which exist in Indiana. Early exposure to career clusters and the education and training pathways that are required for these careers will provide the foundation for a long-term plan to work toward their career interests. Students will not only become more aware of their individual career interests, but will also add to their understanding of the careers available within their community. As they pursue these career paths, these students will be more likely to stay in Indiana if they are able to connect to meaningful career opportunities in their communities.

In task force discussions and regional input sessions, there was consensus students should be exposed to careers prior to high school. A career course in middle school will allow them to begin planning and taking appropriate secondary coursework aligned to their career interests. Additionally, connecting students to work-based learning opportunities will provide new perspectives on careers, help to develop their workplace skills, and link them directly with Indiana employers that may have future job opportunities.

Strategy 5.1

Require all students to complete a career course during middle school

- Utilize the *Exploring College and Careers* currently offered in schools as model for developing the framework for the course
 - Determine the appropriate grade-level to require the course
 - Utilize the course to expose students to the career clusters and their relevance to Indiana and also to develop an understanding of the career pathways to arrive in these careers
 - Reinforce soft skills development throughout the course
 - Leverage existing career exploration tools available within Indiana such as Indiana Career Explorer and Drive of Your Life
 - Determine necessary resources that will be needed for implementation
- Engage Regional Works Councils with schools to confirm regional industry trends and career opportunities



Strategy 5.2

Connect individuals to Hoosier businesses and career opportunities through work-based learning or other “earn and learn” approaches

- Challenge existing employers to add 10,000 new internships in the state within 3 years to retain skilled talent in Indiana
- Leverage existing infrastructure available from Indiana INTERNnet to support connections between employers and students. Identify additional mechanisms to collect work-based learning data beyond Indiana INTERNnet.
- Align with existing work-based learning efforts that have been regionally developed and/or privately funded
- Promote programs such as EARN (Employment Aid Readiness Network) Indiana and Interdisciplinary Cooperative Education (ICE) to support employers expansion of internships and other work-based learning strategies throughout the state
- Provide technical assistance to employers who need support launching internship programs including ways of addressing age and liability insurance concerns. Leverage existing resources from Indiana INTERNnet (existing employer guide) and other partners
- Further develop the high school model for work-based learning
- Encourage all higher education institutions to offer cost-effective credit for internships if they do not already
- Ensure that college students complete “applied knowledge” or work-based learning experiences (such as an internship, co-op, clinical, student teaching, immersive learning, apprenticeship, practicum or similar experience) throughout their postsecondary education



Objective 6: Link career pathways to Indiana high wage, high demand careers for students and adults across the K-12, postsecondary and adult systems in order to remove barriers and encourage acceleration toward degrees and credentials

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 2)

In order to increase the Hoosier workforce's education and skills in alignment with employers' needs, career pathways through that are aligned across the entire talent development system – from K-12 education, to postsecondary education, and into the adult workforce system – must first be aligned with the high-growth, high-wage sectors of the economy. Once on these pathways, though, students and adults should be encouraged to accelerate toward degrees and/or credentials. As a system, partners need to make sure pathways support all students: both traditional students and adults who may experience unique barriers such as work, children, or skill deficiencies.

Strategy 6.1

Expand the opportunities for individuals to earn a high school equivalency *and* an occupational credential

- Scale existing models such as WorkINdiana, the Excel Center, or others
- Identify resources (facilities, funding, etc.) needed to bring these models to a larger scale

Strategy 6.2

Explore innovative funding models to increase support for certificates and industry-recognized credentials demanded by employers

- Explore sustainable funding models for training such as the Iowa Industrial New Jobs training program
- Explore methods to increase CTE access in Indiana's rural school districts in a cost-effective manner (e.g. transportation, virtual methods, mobile labs, etc.)
- Explore the expansion of the Associate Accelerated Program (ASAP) at Ivy Tech Community College to adult students
- Explore the Early College model and employer-driven curriculum model available from Vincennes University and Ivy Tech Community College tied to technical certifications



Objective 7: Provide career counseling to Hoosiers throughout the entire talent development system

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 3)

As students and adults move through the talent development system, there is a need to provide them with two kinds of support: 1) assistance navigating the intricacies of the system, and 2) help understanding and connecting to the career paths that are ripe with career opportunities. Partners throughout the entire system – from K-12 education, to postsecondary institutions, to the public workforce system – each have counselors dedicated to providing this assistance. But, there are simply not enough throughout the state to provide the level of support that is needed. In addition to addressing the volume that is needed across, existing counselors need to be equipped with more information and resources to provide relevant career guidance. Increasing opportunities for professional development, information sharing with partners from other agencies within the system, and direct exposure to local businesses and industries will prepare them to provide more informed, comprehensive counseling.

Strategy 7.1

Establish career coaches throughout Indiana who are integrated into the education and workforce development systems and who work on behalf of all agencies within the talent development system.

- Convene a work group to develop the program/structure for a network of career counselors throughout the state
 - Identify how these career counselors' align and interface with counseling inside the schools, postsecondary institutions, and WorkOne Centers
 - Determine where these career counselors will be "housed" and what resources will be needed for implementation
 - Explore performance based funding based on criteria for reaching students and obtaining outcomes such as:
 - Increases in students entering high priority fields
 - Increases in student obtaining employment or entering postsecondary education in high priority fields of study
- Encourage these career counselors to collaborate directly with regional sector partnerships, Regional Works Councils, Workforce Investment Boards, etc.



Strategy 7.2

Engage professionals from employers in providing career counseling to high school students

- Engage Society of Human Resource Managers (or similar HR/business professionals) in development of career opportunities for high school students preparing for career and college focusing on near and midterm Indiana career opportunities
- Contract with Junior Achievement or similar organization to provide career awareness in the schools

Strategy 7.3

Offer a robust professional development strategy to existing counselors from K-12 education, postsecondary education, the workforce system, and social services

- Ensure all counselors throughout the state are informed/equipped to provide the following:
 - Information about career opportunities within Indiana
 - Knowledge of the various programs/resources/flexibilities available to the individual from the system, all with a focus on the individual's needs
- Develop an online learning platform to provide access to resources, webinars, and other web-based modules.
 - Offer Professional Growth Points (PGPs) or other continuing education credits
 - Engage employer representatives and HR professionals via SHRM chapters to develop content and/or deliver webinars
- Provide professional development tracks for counselors to specialize in priority sectors and earn a "sector/pathway proficient" certification
- Hold an annual career counseling forum to facilitate information sharing and collaboration among counselors and workforce professionals
 - Partner with existing forums/events to leverage resources and counselors' time
 - Utilize the forum as an opportunity to promote up-to-date career information, hot jobs, emerging trends, etc.
 - Connect the work to the annual Postsecondary Counseling Institute
- Develop a mechanism to communicate system-wide about flexibility and changes that affect career counseling (e.g. Pell grants can be used for select short-term credentials)
- Increase counselors' exposure to local businesses and industries and regional workforce and economic development needs
 - Create regional, experiential counselor tours and trainings
 - Consult with superintendents and principals associations to promote staff in-service time for regional trainings and professional development



Objective 8: Connect more effectively with employers to support their workforce needs

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 3)

Effective engagement with employers is central to a demand-driven talent development system. The system must understand and respond to employers' evolving needs in a coordinated, solutions-oriented manner. Currently, multiple partners have strategies in place to meet with existing employers and offer their services. Because there is not a shared approach among partners, however, there is often duplication of efforts and an uncoordinated response to employers' needs. Developing a more collaborative approach at the regional level will extend existing funds farther, increase market penetration so more employers receive assistance, and hopefully lead to higher employer satisfaction and engagement with the system.

Strategy 8.1

Adopt a shared approach among all partners within the talent development system to conduct integrated business outreach

- Position Regional Works Councils to convene program partners that are conducting business outreach or offering services to businesses. Partners may include, but are not limited to:
 - Ivy Tech Corporate College representatives
 - Vincennes University Employer-Education partnerships
 - WorkOne Center business representatives and partners
 - IEDC regional field representatives
 - Regional and local economic development organizations
 - Chambers of commerce
- Organize a work group of partners to design a collaborative approach to identify and address employers' needs that includes mechanisms for:
 - Targeting outreach to businesses that are poised for growth or at-risk
 - Sharing information related to business needs among partners
 - Providing comprehensive solutions that address business needs
 - Flexibility for regional adoption
- Once the collaborative strategy is determined, provide professional development to front-line staff who will be implementing the collaborative strategy



Objective 9: Adopt a sector-based approach that helps to align economic development efforts and the education and training system

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 4)

Increasing the employment opportunities for Hoosiers will require diving deeply into how the State and partners can best support sector growth. But, a “one-size fits all” approach will not work. Indiana must invest time and resources in strategies that fit individual sector needs, particularly the wealth-producing, high-growth sectors of the economy. The National Governors Association notes, “Sector strategies are among the few workforce interventions that statistical evidence shows to improve employment opportunities for work and to increase their wages once on the job.”¹

Just as a “one-size fits all” approach does not work for the individual sectors, the same is true of the regions throughout the states. Sectors at the regional level are nuanced and oftentimes require much different strategies than those which are effective at the state-level. Therefore, regional sector partnerships will provide a mechanism for deploying sector strategies throughout Indiana. In fact, there are several sector partnership initiatives throughout the state that can be leveraged and/or aligned with the state-wide framework.

Strategy 9.1

Launch regional sector partnerships that complement the State’s priority industry sectors to provide a mechanism to collect information and respond to sector needs

- Formally recognize the following sectors as a priority for the state’s economic development and education and training systems as determined by IEDC:
 - Advanced manufacturing
 - Agribusiness
 - Energy
 - Information technology
 - Life sciences and health care
 - Logistics
 - Defense and national security
- Design the regional sector partnership framework that is:
 - Focused on a singular sector for each partnership that is aligned and/or complementary to the State’s priority sectors

¹ National Governors Association, “State Sector Strategies Coming of Age: Implications for State Workforce Policy Makers.” <http://www.nga.org/cms/home/nga-center-for-best-practices/center-publications/page-ehsw-publications/col2-content/main-content-list/state-sector-strategies-coming-o.html>



- Driven by business representatives
 - Regionally-based
 - Supported by partner organizations including economic development, workforce development, postsecondary education, K12 education, and other community-based organizations
 - A mechanism for partners to work together more proactively to support growth in these sectors
- Document existing industry initiatives/organizations within the state to build upon when designing the framework. Provide flexibility within the framework for regions to leverage these existing initiatives.
- Determine the necessary resources (staff, financial resources, etc.) to implement regional sector partnerships
- Convene regional stakeholders for a statewide Sector Partnership Forum to share the vision, ideal structure, and tools/support that will be available as well as allow for networking and peer-to-peer learning
- Provide technical assistance/start-up assistance to regional sector partnerships
 - Provide existing industry data available from IEDC to the sector partnerships for planning and start-up
 - Encourage regions to examine clusters and supply chains in launching their sector partnerships



Objective 10: Retain and attract high-skill, Hoosier talent in Indiana’s priority sectors by strengthening and promoting the quality of place in Indiana

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 4)

Quality of place has become increasingly important to retraining and attracting talent and companies, especially in the STEM fields. “Quality of Place” includes multiple factors such as community design and planning, wellness/health, education, arts and culture, and governance. Therefore, improving quality of place requires a community-wide approach that builds off of the local area’s existing assets and unique potential for growth and development.

The Indiana Economic Development Corporation will be launching a new strategy to invest in quality of place initiatives throughout Indiana. By actively supporting this strategy, as well as leveraging other existing efforts such as the Place-based Investment Fund available from the Office of Community and Rural Affairs and the Office of Tourism, the Career Council can help elevate the importance of quality of place as it relates to talent retention and economic development.

Strategy 10.1

Support the IEDC in implementing a place-based strategy for Indiana

- Review existing place-based strategies throughout Indiana
 - Office of Community and Rural Affairs, Place Based Investment Fund (PBIF)
 - Ball State University, Building Better Communities, Primacy of Place initiative
 - Indiana Economic Development Corporation, HEA 1035
- Identify gaps in support/funding that need to be filled
- In strategy, account for local difference and assets as well as workforce needs (e.g. IT workforce/companies may define ‘quality of place’ in a different manner than agribusiness)
- After evaluating HEA 1035 pilot sites, expand to additional communities throughout Indiana, if successful
- Coordinate a consistent message that promotes the quality of place within Indiana to attract talent and companies. Elevate the importance of quality of place so communities and private funders view it as a keen economic development investment.



Objective 11: Engage Indiana’s colleges and universities as partners in innovation and entrepreneurship

(Aligns with Strategic Imperative 5)

The universities and colleges within Indiana are hotbeds of innovation that, with the appropriate support and attention, can be harnessed as drivers of entrepreneurship and economic growth. The research and development occurring within the institutions is ripe for technology transfer and commercialization activities that will spur new business growth. Higher education institutions can also become a close partner of industry as companies undergo their own research and development activities. This becomes a “win-win” for companies who benefit from faculty expertise and institutions who earn an employer partner and can potentially seize new funding opportunities, all while addressing the shortage of employment opportunities for highly skilled talent.

Strategy 11.1

Encourage colleges and universities to increase technology transfer and commercialization activities

- Urge leadership (Presidents, Boards of Trustees) at the colleges and universities to embed technology transfer and innovation into institutional culture/expectations. Educate leadership about the potential impact on Indiana’s economy and the benefits it can have on their institutions (revenue, marketing/image, etc.)
- Develop an “innovation dashboard” for public colleges and universities in the state to depict their commercialization and technology transfer contributions
- Encourage faculty involvement in technology transfer and commercialization efforts
 - Provide incentives/positive reinforcements for faculty-led innovation (e.g. bonuses, department competitions, etc.)
 - Provide faculty with technical assistance and/or coaching in commercialization
- Explore federal opportunities for universities and colleges to receive financial support for innovation and research and development that may include, but is not limited to:
 - National Science Foundation
 - National Networking for Manufacturing Innovation
 - Small Business Innovation Research program



Strategy 11.2

Seed Centers of Excellence at the colleges and universities throughout Indiana that are aligned to regional/state target industries

- Structure the Centers of Excellence to provide research and development support/expertise in close partnership with industry in target sectors in the region
 - Gauge interest from colleges and universities in becoming Centers of Excellence
 - Review best practices across the country for lessons learned and elements to adopt
 - Develop a model and identify resources that will be needed
 - Explore funding models that may include local matching funds, scaled state support (e.g. 75% funding in Year 1, 50% in Year 2, sustainable by Year X), etc.
- Define “Centers of Excellence” to include initiatives such as Eco15, the Battery Innovation Center, Indiana Bioscience Research Institute, and other existing efforts
- Link Centers of Excellence directly with regional sector partnerships

Strategy 11.3

Examine state support of business incubators throughout the state

- Review and learn from successful models within Indiana as well as models from outside the State
- Provide information and technical assistance to communities who want to open business incubators in their regions
- Determine the need for and/or feasibility of state financial support